

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Withdrawn) A pseudo-thermosetting neutralized chitosan composition, which comprises 0.1 to 2.0 wt/v %, based on the total composition, of a homogeneously reacetylated chitosan derived from a chitosan having a deacetylation degree of 80-90 %, having a molecular weight of not smaller than 200 kDa and a deacetylation degree of 30-60 %, neutralized with an hydroxylated base, wherein said composition forms a phosphate free transparent hydrogel at a temperature higher than 5°C.
2. (Withdrawn) The pseudo-thermosetting neutralized chitosan composition according to claim 1, comprising 0.5 to 1 wt/v %, based on the total composition, of said homogeneously reacetylated chitosan.
3. (Withdrawn) The pseudo-thermosetting neutralized chitosan composition according to claim 1, wherein the deacetylation degree of said homogeneously reacetylated chitosan is 45 to 55 %.
4. (Withdrawn) The pseudo-thermosetting neutralized chitosan composition according to claim 1, wherein the molecular weight of said homogeneously reacetylated chitosan is not smaller than 600 kDa.

5. (Withdrawn) The pseudo-thermosetting neutralized chitosan composition according to claim 1, further comprising a diol having a distance of at least 4.7 Å between its hydroxyl groups.

6. (Withdrawn) The pseudo-thermosetting neutralized chitosan composition according to claim 5, wherein said diol is 1,3-propanediol.

7. (Cancelled).

8. (Currently Amended) The homogeneously reacetylated chitosan according to claim 10, wherein treating includes:

dialyzing the chitosan obtained in step e) to eliminate salts produced during reacetylation in order to obtain a homogeneously reacetylated chitosan solution;

filtrating the chitosan solution obtained to eliminate insoluble particles of chitosan;

precipitating the chitosan contained in the filtrated solution obtained and then drying the chitosan to obtain a homogeneously reacetylated chitosan having a deacetylation degree of 30 - 60 %.

9. (Previously Presented) The homogeneously reacetylated chitosan according to claim 10, wherein precipitating includes addition of a mixture of NH₄OH/methanol.

10. (Currently Amended) A homogeneously reacetylated chitosan having a molecular weight of not smaller than 200 kDa and a deacetylation degree of 30-60% ~~obtained by a process for use in the preparation of a pseudo-thermosetting neutralized chitosan composition forming a phosphate-free transparent hydrogel at a temperature higher than 5°C, wherein said homogeneously reacetylated chitosan is obtained by thea process comprisescomprising:~~

filtrating a chitosan having a molecular weight of not smaller than 200 kDa and a deacetylation degree of 80 to 90 % dissolved in an acidic medium to eliminate insoluble particles;

precipitating chitosan contained in the filtrated acidic solution to obtain chitosan free of insoluble particles;

preparing a cooled acidic solution of the chitosan free of insoluble particles ~~obtained at~~ at a temperature lower than 5°C to obtain a cooled acidic solution of chitosan free of insoluble particles;

preparing a cooled acetic anhydride solution containing a predetermined amount of acetic anhydride in methanol at a temperature lower than 5°C;

reacetylating chitosan by adding dropwise, under homogeneous conditions, the cooled acetic anhydride solution ~~free of insoluble particles~~ to the cooled acidic solution of chitosan free of insoluble particles to provide a crude homogeneously reacetylated chitosan having a deacetylation degree of 30-60 %;

treating said crude chitosan to eliminate salts produced during reacetylation and insoluble particles of chitosan to obtain a homogeneously reacetylated chitosan having a deacetylation degree of 30-60 %.

11-21. (Cancelled).

22. (Previously Presented) A homogeneously reacetylated chitosan having a molecular weight of not smaller than 200 kDa and a deacetylation degree of 30-60% for use in the preparation of a pseudo-thermosetting neutralized chitosan composition forming a phosphate-free transparent hydrogel at a temperature higher than 5°C.